This listing of Claims shall replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1.    (Original) A method of processing a signal comprising the steps of:

a) reading a first bit section from a bit stream of variable length codes beginning at a reference bit of said bit stream;

b) reading a second bit section from said bit stream beginning at a first offset from said reference bit of said bit stream, wherein steps a) and b) are done in parallel;

c) indexing a table with said first bit section to obtain a first look-up result, said table comprising a plurality of variable length codes and a corresponding plurality of code lengths, said first look-up result describing the length of a first symbol in said bit stream;

d) indexing said table with said second bit section to obtain a second look-up result, wherein steps c) and d) are done in parallel;

e) determining if said second look-up result from step d) is valid; and

f) accepting said second look-up result if it is valid, wherein said second look-up result describes a second symbol length in said bit stream.

2.    (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

g) advancing the reference bit of said bit stream by the sum of said first and second symbol lengths; and

h) repeating steps a) through f).

3.   (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

g) reading a third bit section from said bit stream beginning at a second offset from said reference bit of said bit stream, wherein step a), step b), and step g) are done in parallel;

h) indexing said table with said third bit section to obtain a third look-up result, wherein step c), step d), and step h) are done in parallel; and

i) determining whether said third look-up result from step h) is valid.


4.   (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said first offset is equal to the minimum code length of codes in said table.


5.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 2 3 wherein said second offset is one bit greater than said first offset.


6.   (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein said bit stream comprises digital video data.


7.   (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein said bit stream comprises data in MPEG format.


8.   (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein said bit stream comprises data encoded with Huffman coding.


9-12.  (Cancelled)


13-22.  (Cancelled) (Restriction)